



LIMELIGHT

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2000

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The November workshop with the Ontario Historical Society was a great success. Their emphasis on the importance of our heritage and the need to preserve it brought to mind that our Society needs to be an active voice when Kingston's heritage is threatened. The most recent concern, of course, is the deplorable state of maintenance at Fort Henry. While a number of levels of governments are responsible, the Federal Government must take the lead. As a result I have written to the Heritage Minister, Sheila Copps. However this is not just a matter for the Society and I encourage each of you to take this matter into the public forum. My letter follows.

"Dear Minister: The Council and members of the Kingston Historical Society are very concerned about the apparent unwillingness of various levels of government to arrive at a quick and expeditious agreement to undertake the critically needed structural repairs of Fort Henry. It is disappointing that the Federal Government and your ministry have not taken the lead in this issue. Sadly, Fort Henry is caught in a bureaucratic maze of intra-governmental indecision that will surely paralyze its programmes and threaten its future unless prompt action is taken.

While Fort Henry no longer stands vital to the security of the lower Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, it does stand as a reminder of the rich cultural history of Canada and that it was once considered essential to our survival. Today, the Fort stands critical to the economic health of the tourism industry in this area, generating revenue for the local and surrounding communities and employment for their residents. Tens of thousands of visitors annually inject hundreds of thousands of dollars into the local economies. Each year, many students experience first hand, a little of what life was like for those who lived, worked, and played here more than a century ago. And perhaps most important, the Fort and the many other museums and historical sites in and around our community are a testimony to who and what we were and help to define who we are today.

Therefore, we of the Kingston Historical Society call on you as Heritage Minister, to not just remember your mandate, but to act on it expeditiously. Canada's heritage must be supported; Fort Henry needs immediate attention and long-term financial commitment. It would be a sad legacy to your Ministry if Fort Henry were able to

withstand everything but bureaucratic indifference."

I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year.

(Warren Everett)

OUR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of KHS will be 7.30 p.m., Wednesday, 13 December, Memorial Hall, City Hall. It's our **Christmas Party**, and the occasion for presenting the KHS annual Awards.

Also, **Rob Crothers** of Mill and Ross, Architects, will speak on the topic, "**Canada's Oldest Architectural Practice....We Think!**"

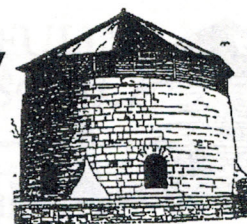
Any members wishing assistance in attending please call Brian Osborne (533-6042) to coordinate a ride.

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Kingston Historical Society

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Memberships: Individual, \$35; Family, \$40; Institutional, \$40; Student, \$25.

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KHS Web Site: <http://www.heritagekingston.org/khs>

AND ONE FROM THE EDITORS...


This newsletter belongs to you. It works best when it's full of your contributions. Last month we had rich contributions from Corbett, O'Meara, and Smithson. This month we have pieces submitted by Ian Miln and Shirley Gibson-Langille. Indeed, we hope Shirley's pieces will become a regular feature in **Limelight**. We have persuaded her to accompany reproductions of pieces of her art by personal vignettes that allow us to share her reactions to her work. Emile Zola said that "Art is reality seen through an imagination" and we will be able to discover the relationship between Shirley's "landscapes" and her "inscapes" -- what Gerard Manley Hopkins called "the outward reflection of the inner nature of a thing." Welcome, Shirley. 

LOOKING AHEAD: SIR JOHN'S BIRTHDAY

Several people have suggested that KHS should not neglect Sir John A. Macdonald's birthday -- 11 January. Accordingly, we propose that the January meeting of KHS be held on Thursday, 11 January 2001 and that it be dedicated to him. It will take the form of a dinner plus guest speaker and appropriate toasts (!) to our community's most distinguished citizen.

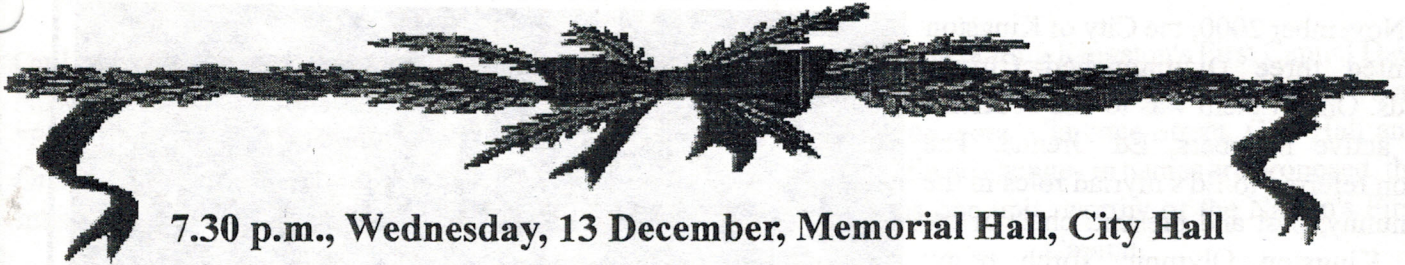
The 2001 Macdonald Speaker will be Professor Don Smith, Department of History, University of Alberta, who will address the society on "John A. Macdonald and Aboriginal Canada." Professor Smith is a much published author on the Ojibwa, Mississauga, "Grey Owl," and Native missionaries.

The venue will be the officers' mess, Royal Military College. The cost for dinner (soup/juice, chicken, dessert, beverage) will be \$26 per person. Dress: semi-formal...but Scottish regalia allowed! If you are interested in attending please send your cheque for \$26 per person to Alan MacLachlan (549-8841), KHS, Box 54, Kingston, K7L 4V6. Alan will also be prepared to accept bookings at the Christmas Party, 13 December.

A special invitation is extended to all other historical/heritage/cultural groups in the wider Kingston region. 



CHRISTMAS PARTY



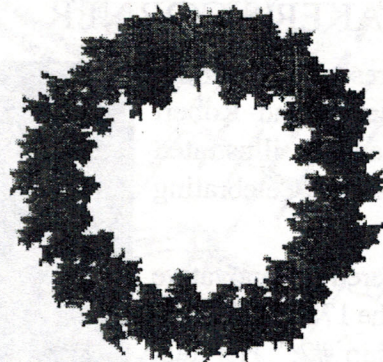
7.30 p.m., Wednesday, 13 December, Memorial Hall, City Hall

Rob Crothers

Mill and Ross, Architects

will speak on the topic:

Canada's Oldest Architectural Practice....We Think!



The Kingston Historical Society Annual Awards will also be presented in an evening of good cheer, fine company and historical enlightenment

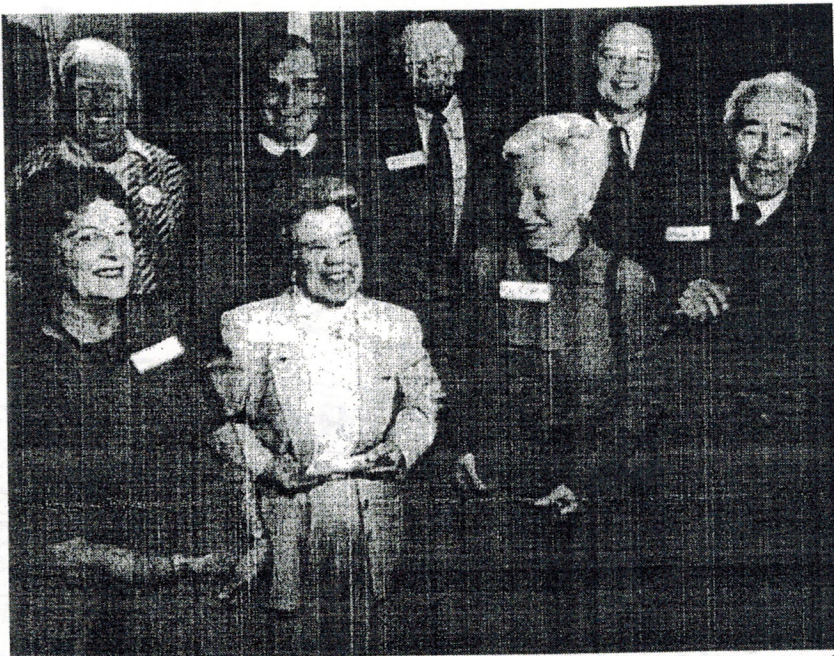
Admission Free for Members

Any members wishing assistance in attending please call Brian Osborne
(533-6042) to coordinate a ride.



CONGRATULATIONS

On 7 November 2000, the City of Kingston presented three Distinguished Citizen Awards. One of them was to one of KHS's most active members, Ed Grenda. The citation referred to Ed's myriad roles in the community, past and present: chair of the 1988 Kingston Olympic Torch relay; managing director of the 1990 Canada/USSR Fit Trek; principal organizer of the visit by Chinese officials in the early 1990s; chair of the Kingston Coat of Arms committee; co-founder of the Kingston Triathlon; service to the Historic Hockey Series; member of the city's Culture and Recreation Advisory Committee; and chair of the Murney Tower Museum Board. Wow! A well deserved award.

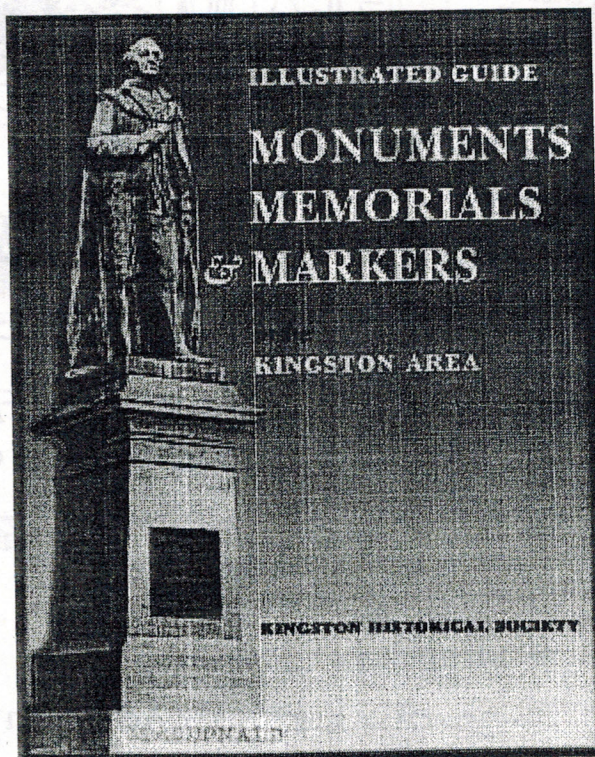


SPEAKER'S CORNER

At our November meeting, KHS hosted representatives of the Ontario Historical Society -- Dorothy Duncan and Robert Levery. Using videos, OHS publications, and an illustrated presentation, they encouraged us to join them in "Celebrating One Thousand Years of Ontario's History."

Following a light dinner, Barbara Snyder offered an innovative perspective on the formative experiences of the 1784 settlement process, "New Roots in Cataraqui Township #2." Her talk moved beyond the usual factors of assumed ideology, class, ethnicity, and military affiliation. Using contemporary and provocative images, Barbara examined the factors that influenced the way the "loyalists" gathered at Sorel perceived and encountered their new homes beyond the St. Lawrence, on the Bay of Quinte.

This was followed by a well orchestrated group presentation by the members of the KHS "Plaque Committee" and authors of **An Illustrated Guide to Monuments, Memorials, & Markers** in the Kingston Area. Edward Storey, John Grenville, William Petterson, and Jennifer McKendry educated us on the development of the philosophy and process of commemoration in Canada, Ontario, and Kingston, demonstrated the prominent position held by Kingston in the celebration of the nation's history, and convinced us that their **IGMM&M** was not just a "Plaque Book"! All would agree that what they have produced for us is a well researched and attractively presented tour through Kingston's historical events, places, and people.



FIRST CAPITAL PLACE

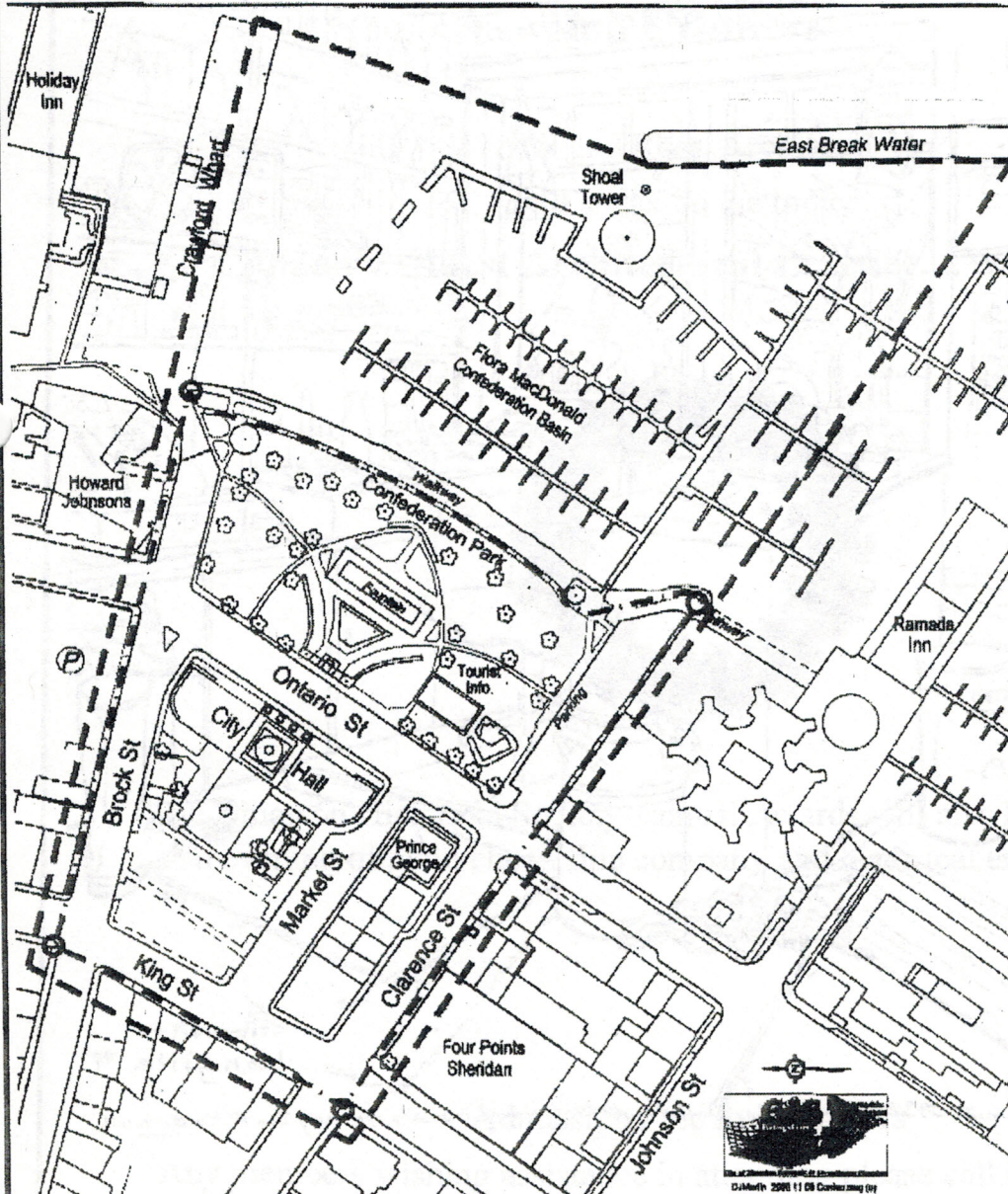
On 15 June 2000, the Lieutenant Governor joined with Kingstonians in celebrating Kingston's First Capital Day. Now, Ian Milne, the co-ordinator of "Kingston: First Capital," is moving to rename a section of downtown as "First Capital Place." The Proposed FCP would comprise Market Square and Clarence Street, City Hall and Ontario Street, Confederation Park and Basin, and the Shoal Tower. While no changes in names are proposed, the intention is that "First Capital Place ... be protected and developed as one unit, worthy of the Nation's First Capital."

Legend

- - - - - Walk & Seating
- - - - - Perimeter

FIRST CAPITAL PLACE

Kingston
United Canada
1841



As part of the "development," a walk-way is proposed with seating places to provide unobstructed views across FCP. Another suggestion is that "Confederation Arch" be removed. It is argued that this inexpensive circular route with its safe road-crossings will attract locals and visitors, be suitable for seniors, and will be wheelchair accessible in both summer and winter.

According to Ian Milne, the idea of FCP has been welcomed by the former Mayor and councillors, as well as by City Hall Staff and the Market Square Development Group. Since the election, the Kingston First Capital group have been continuing their consultations with the City, KEDCO, the Downtown Business Association, Heritage Kingston, and MPP John Gerretsen's office. Ian Milne is hopeful that the proposal will be adopted, and that the walkway and seating be implemented in time for the celebration of First Capital Day on 15 June 2001.

It is important that KHS become involved in this important project as it develops. If members have any ideas or reactions to this concept, please contact Ian R. Milne, 35 Johnson Street, Kingston, K7L 1X5, (544-4447), or firstcapital@kingston.org. For more information, see www.kingston.org/firstcapital.

LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES

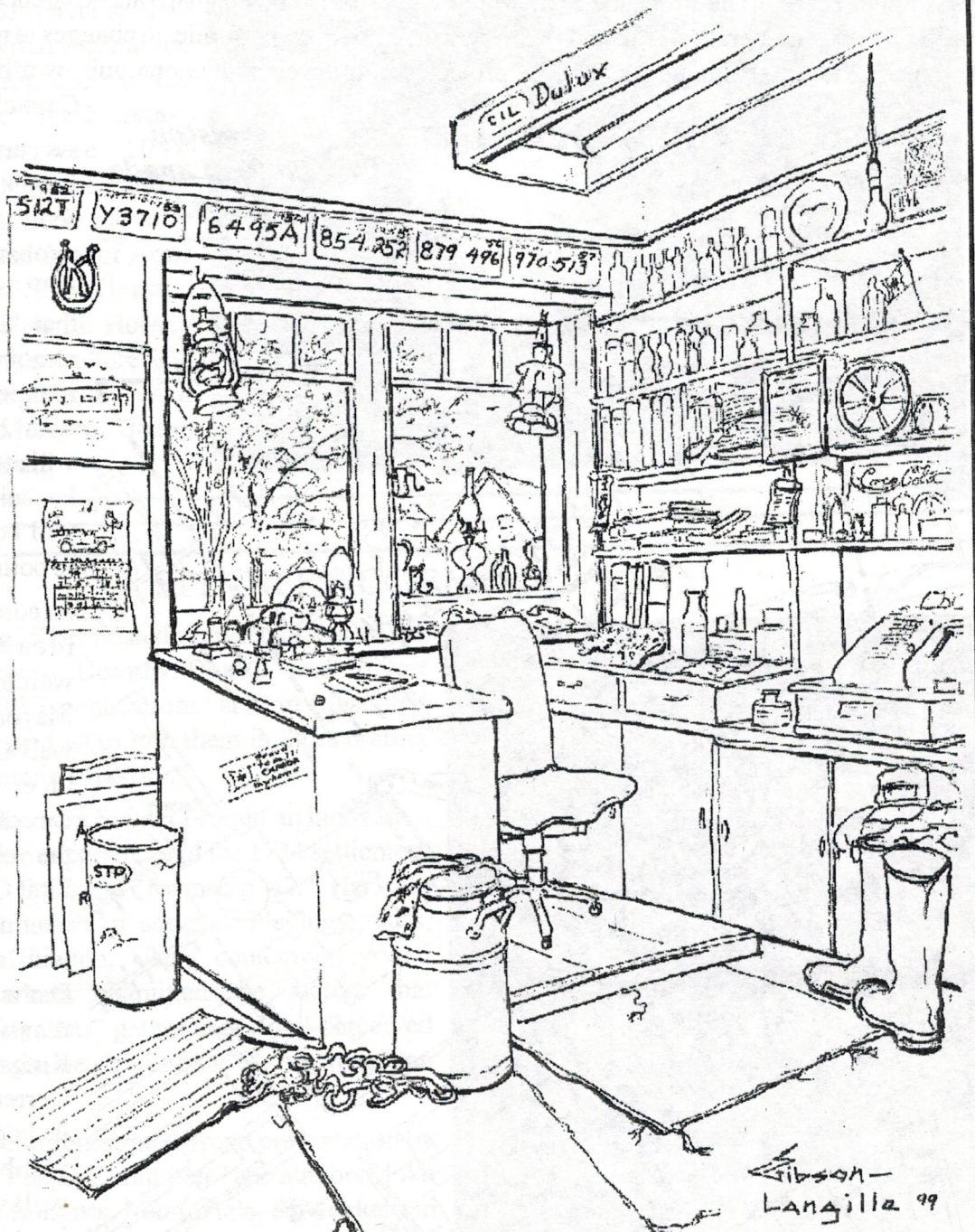
Many of the joys of painting are the experiences I have while doing it. I meet so many interesting people. Through them, I learn about history and often much more!

This pen and ink drawing, **Gord Kimmett's Welding Shop**, is a rendering of a particular place in Selby, in what was formerly Richmond Township. When I first visited it, I knocked on the door and met Gord. He proceeded to show me around his shop. It was so interesting! Every corner was full of old antiques and nostalgia. Gord told me that he had been there since 1967 and it had been Dan McKim's Blacksmith Shop before that.

Later, this piece, along with its story, was aired on Cablenet TV. I got a call from George Vosper who had been watching the programme. He told me that Dan McKim was his uncle and that his grandmother was Dan McKim's sister. Sargent James McKim, was from the Jessop's Rangers. His daughter, Nancy, married John Grange who ran the Cartwright Mill in Napanee. George stated

that he had McKims on both sides of the family -- but that's another whole story!

Well, the outcome was that George bought the painting and Gord Kimmett helped me at my art show by bringing a display of old implement seats. Great, eh what! (Shirley Gibson-Langille)



Gord Kimmett's Welding - Selby Ontario 1967 - Richmond Township (formerly Dan McKim's Blacksmith Shop)

FOCUS ON THE RIDEAU: AN ENCOUNTER IN THE WILDERNESS

By the time the Rideau was ready for navigation in May 1832, there were not many Natives left throughout the back-country. As early as 1784, the Kingston-Gananoque Mississauga had ceded land for the Loyalist settlements and in 1819-22 they relinquished control over some three million acres between Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River. The right of the Mississauga to dispose of their lands in this way was disputed by the neighbouring Algonquins. Nevertheless, the British were content with the outcome and proceeded to survey the lands, encourage settlement for strategic purposes, and construct their Rideau waterway.

But some native peoples remained throughout the Rideau corridor. A few clustered in camps around the edges of Kingston, supplying wild rice, game, and fish for the local market, and eliciting much bigoted commentary from contemporary observers. In 1832, a reserve of nineteen, 144-acre lots was laid out on Rideau Lake in Bedford Township and several families of Kingston Mississauga and Lake of Two Mountains Algonquin settled there and pursued their traditional way of life.

Probably, these were the native peoples Col. By encountered when the **Pumper** made its maiden voyage along the route of the newly completed Rideau on 24-29 May 1832. According to one, "An inhabitant of Canada" writing in the **Montreal Gazette** in June 27 1833, the party met up with some "natives of the forest" living on the shores of Indian Lake, forty miles in the interior. It appears to have been quite a colourful occasion. A contemporary account records that "reiterated shouts of the thunderstruck inhabitants rent the air, and the kindly feeling displayed by the Indians can hardly be described." It must have been a dramatic scene:

on the boat entering the lake, they formed themselves in front of their camp -- number about forty or fifty men, women, and children, with an Indian Chief at their head -- with two union jacks floating in the air, shaded with the dark green foliage of the clustering pines; they gave us three cheers, and fired a **feu de joie** that would not discredit a regularly organized corps.

What followed was a piece of unrehearsed drama that must have been as touching as it was rich in symbolism. Seeing that Col. By had no colours, they planted their flags at the bow and stern, admonishing that "he must keep them until he entered Bytown, like a Captain who had fought and won his battle." Stationing themselves along the sides of the boat, they kept firing until the party passed through two other lakes. As one of the party put it, "the gratification felt in every breast on board at the time was such to induce anyone to wish to be Col. By for one half hour."

But there is another account of the first voyage. The September 1833 edition of the Methodist **Christian Guardian** reported "much to our surprise, and more to our grief" that "a party of Indians" were invited on board and "solicited to drink brandy and other intoxicating liquor by the **gentlemen**." The result of this "diabolical work" was a "drunken frolic which continued several days." In the eyes of the good Methodists of the **Christian Guardian**, the engineering and technological wonders of the Rideau were tainted by the impact on their Native charges. Indeed, they attributed the subsequent presence of "drunken natives" in the streets of Kingston to the backsliding precipitated by the incident on the shores of the Rideau waterway.

The Bedford reserve was short-lived. In 1837, the Algonquins were forced to return to their reserve at Lake of Two Mountains while the Mississauga -- together with their brethren at Grape Island -- were relocated to the newly established reserve at Alderville, south of Rice Lake. Nevertheless, some families from both groups continued to return to the Rideau country for seasonal hunting, while others eventually settled permanently throughout the country, retreating north in the face of the expanding settlement. Today, they survive as the non-status groups centred on Ardoch in the rear of Frontenac County, amidst the lands they continue to regard as their traditional "homelands."

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